

FRENCH REVOLUTION AS A WORLD
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demand that the community should assume control of the sources of production, in order to assure to every member a fair share in the necessities and amenities of life. When the conquest of at any rate theoretical political equality in most of the civilized countries of the world had been followed by the discovery how little the manual worker had profited, the minimum standard of life—a minimum of material well-being, education, leisure, opportunity—became the gospel of reformers. It is in this insistent and righteous claim of the common man for his place in the sun that the operation of the fundamental principle of the French Revolution is most clearly traceable at the present time.

The Revolution proclaimed the gospel of human rights and national self-determination, but its leaders never rose to the august conception of an all-embracing league of nations. The eccentric Prussian Baron, Anacharsis Cloots, who threw in his lot with the French reformers, led a deputation of foreign residents in Paris to the bar of the Assembly as delegates of the human race; but his vision of a united humanity involved the disappearance of nationality. "As individuals have improved their lot by forming communities," he wrote in 1791, "so peoples will benefit by combining into a single nation. When national sentiment is abolished, the whole world will be the fatherland of every individual. There will be no more *troubles* and no more war. The French Assembly will then be the representative body of the thousand departments of the world, each returning ten members, and Paris will be the capital of the globe, the Vatican of Reason. All the world will be a Garden of Eden, and East and West will embrace. The world will enjoy perpetual peace; but to reach it there must be one more war against tyrants." Before East and West could embrace, Anacharsis Cloots perished by

the guillotine.

After three years' experience of the war which
Cloots had foretold and desired, another German of very
different calibre sketched out a plan for a League of Nations
which accepted the teaching of Sully, William Perm and the Abbé
Saint-Pierre, and carried it a stage further. In his pregnant
little treatise *Perpetual Peace* Kant seizes on the idea of self-
government and rears upon it the ideal of a supernational
organization. If
law, based on reason and morality, is the
foundation of the
life of the State, it should equally regulate the
relations of
States to one another. The family of nations
needs a constitu-
tion no less than France and Russia; for so
long as each